

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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GREAT SIGNIFICANCE OF SUMMIT CONFERENCE

by Herbert W. Armstrong

"Heads of Europe no longer see eye to eye with Washington," said Dan Rather Monday night on a special CBS News roundup.

He said the European heads of state no longer trust American leadership, and President Carter's image has materially decreased in Europe. European leaders have gained confidence in themselves. They regard Americans as blundering amateurs in world diplomacy.

Mr. Carter's Olympic boycott, his debacle in attempting to rescue the hostages in Iran without first conferring with U.S. allies, and his Middle East agreement with Begin and Sadat, especially, have brought discredit on Carter in their eyes.

All these things are extremely significant. Europe is rapidly moving toward a European political union, and a hostile attitude toward the United States. The time is RIPE for Pope John Paul II to move in as the STRONG MAN to weld Europe together in a resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire of 554-1814 A.D. as prophesied.

Mrs. Thatcher, Britain's Prime Minister, stands alone with the United States. Britain will not be in the "Holy Roman Empire." But Britain will be DESTROYED by it, along with the United States!

When this European empire is perfected, the great Work God is doing through this Church will be quickly completed--finished.

Jesus spoke of observing signs in the sky predicting tomorrow's weather, then asked whether we could discern the "signs of the times." What are "signs?" A sign identifies. A sign on a store identifies the kind of store as well as its owner. It is a signal identifying in advance a soon-coming or imminent event. Jesus' disciples asked Him what would be the sign of His coming, and the end of this age. That is, the signal identifying its imminency. The sign He gave was that which He is doing through us--proclaiming for the first time in 1900 years to the world the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD (Matthew 24:14).

But next, after our work, is to come the GREAT TRIBULATION (verses 21-22. That shall be ended, verse 29, by supernatural, frightful signs in the sun, moon, and stars; signaling the "day of the Lord"--see also Joel 2:31). Then quickly; the coming of Christ. See also Daniel 12:1.

Events now occurring SWIFTLY in the world are SIGNS of the imminency of the Great Tribulation. No one will be allowed to proclaim Christ's

Gospel then. The "Philadelphia era" or succession of God's Church will be taken on the "two wings of a great eagle"--whatever that symbolizes--to a place of protection where we are to be "fed"--provided for. We need now to begin to be ALERT, for this "flight" may happen suddenly. DO NOT BE DECEIVED BY THE NEGATIVE SNEERING OF EXCOMMUNICATED MINISTERS! Both Revelation 12:13 and 3:10 warn us.

We, ourselves, are a sign (Matt. 24:14) of the very imminency of these things!

I say again and again, it is later than we think.

Fellow Ministers, God has made it our job to PREPARE His Church--that we may be "without spot or wrinkle...holy and without blemish" WHEN Christ comes!

This means renewed dedication, more constant and intensive earnest prayer, "soul-searching," and determined preparation. This is a serious responsibility for all of us!

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WHEN I PASTORED A LOCAL CHURCH

by

Herbert W. Armstrong

Several who have held high positions at Pasadena Headquarters--mostly no longer with us--never had the experience of pastoring a local church "in the field." Among these were my son Garner Ted Armstrong, Albert Portune, Ron Dart, Robert Kuhn. This also includes Rod Meredith.

Whether or not this lack of "field" experience was a handicap, it does remain a fact that being a pastor of a local church provides a minister with an invaluable experience. Also among our ex-evangelist rank men who have held high positions at Headquarters are Wayne Cole and David Antion. Both of these had considerable local church pastoring experience.

But Jesus Christ, living HEAD of the Church, did not raise up the entire Worldwide Church of God through His chosen Apostle, without giving me that very important experience. Some of you ministers may have forgotten it, but I myself had to go through this important experience before Christ could use me in the chief executive position now, and the experience of building and developing the growth of the Church as a whole. I was pastor of the parent church at Eugene, Oregon for a number of years.

While there I also started, and kept growing, the radio broadcast, The PLAIN TRUTH, The Good News. Also I found time to hold frequent and continuous six-nights-a-week meetings in other towns and locations in Oregon. These brought in and baptized new members.

In fact, it was this very experience--bringing in new members in several other locations--that led to the necessity of founding Ambassador College. At a number of these points five or more new converts were

baptized. I tried to appoint one of them who seemed to be somewhat of a leader, to continue leading the new little group in either a Sabbath School or a tiny local church. But they were not trained or ordained ministers, and in no case did these newly raised up little groups continue longer than six weeks or so.

I saw that I was wasting time carrying on evangelistic work, resulting in new conversions, unless there was a trained and competent local shepherd to feed and protect the newly-begotten sheep. That led to the founding of Ambassador College.

But I did have a number of years of experience pastoring the very parent church of the present Worldwide Church of God. And I thought, this morning, the longest day of the year, that some of my experiences there might be helpful to some of you.

I learned, before we became a church of many local churches, that one encounters problems with people, and with human nature in a local church, just as we now do in the Church at large spreading around the world.

I found we had, on occasion, troublemakers. We had some I had believed to have been converted and to have received the Holy Spirit of God, who were in a carnal and bad attitude. And I learned this--even as you may have--or you will: one in a rotten attitude CANNOT BE REASONED WITH OR DEALT WITH. You might as well drop them.

Now first understand this: among the carnal and unconverted, some have a pleasant, cooperative attitude--some go to the opposite extreme of a rotten, hostile, and totally uncooperative attitude. Even one who has received the Holy Spirit of God has not been filled with the loving, kind, helpful, cooperative attitude of God. One receives the Spirit of God by degrees. Jesus Christ was filled with the Spirit of God totally and completely--fully. He was begotten of God and not of a human father. He had God's Spirit in its fullness from birth--none of us has.

A newly-begotten Christian has received a certain degree of God's Spirit--actually, some more, others less. But all "babes in Christ" still have the same old "HUMAN NATURE." Satan starts injecting that human nature--the nature of contention, self and selfishness, coveting, lust and greed, jealousy, envy, competition and strife, rebellion against authority--in every human as early in a child's life as the mind begins to develop--while a very young child.

This spirit of Satan (human nature) is absorbed in different people in varying degrees. Some become criminal-minded even in their teens. Some are more or less compatible and cooperative. Even human nature varies.

At real conversion one receives the Holy Spirit from GOD--but in a certain measure or degree. That is the DIVINE NATURE taking root within (II Pet. 1:4). But the human nature is likely to dominate, until one so yields to God, to His Word, and is diligent in prayer and GROWS in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ (II Pet. 3:18), that finally the DIVINE NATURE dominates--one comes to be led more by God's nature and His Word than by the carnal nature of Satan.

And all this happens in varying degrees in various individuals.

But one who is more or less constantly contentious, in a rotten spirit and attitude, unwilling continually to be cooperative and reasonable, you might as well write off and get rid of.

Even one who has God's Holy Spirit and is trying to grow in grace and in God's Spirit, may have lapses of temporary carnality--a flaring up of a wrong attitude--and then, soon afterward, come to his senses and repent of the momentary carnal lapse.

The local pastor must bear in mind that different people have varying degrees of the carnal attitude and nature of Satan, and varying degrees of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And the pastor must learn to handle them accordingly--to wisely discern the REAL nature and attitude of a member who becomes a problem.

I remember a "pentecostal" woman who started attending at Eugene. I had not baptized her--she was not one of my converts, but started attending--professing to be a real "born again" Christian. She was a "holier-than-thou." But her attitude was hostile to God's truth which I was preaching. She, like all such troublemakers, had an uncanny knack of discerning who of our congregation were the weakest spiritually. She would sit next to such a person. Continually, as I preached, she would whisper in the ear of the weak one, disputing and disagreeing with what I was preaching. About the second Sabbath this went on, I stopped the sermon, and spoke directly to this self-righteous, contentious woman.

"If you would stop whispering in the ear of the one sitting next to you, contradicting what I am saying, and pay attention yourself to what I am saying, you might learn some TRUTH," I said. "But if you continue this whispering another time, I shall call the deacons to escort you out of the church!"

After the service I dealt with her privately, and she discontinued coming.

I had many experiences during those years when I was pastoring a local church. Anyway, it occurred to me this morning that some of these thoughts might be helpful to you ministers. Do not think I do not realize and sympathize with your local problems. I have experienced such problems myself.

And all the more, because I have, I do from the bottom of my heart APPRECIATE the good work you men and your wives are doing all over the world in our local churches. Your local flocks are YOUR CHILDREN IN THE LORD, and you are trying to coach and help them to grow spiritually so they may have a place with us in THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

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SPECIAL TO MINISTERS AND WIVES

by

Herbert W. Armstrong

The other day members of the Mail Processing Center in Pasadena wrote me personal letters. One, for example, had been writing letters FOR me to those who had written to me, taking off of me for the past twenty years the time-consuming job of giving personal answer to the voluminous mail addressed to me--yet had never in all those twenty years written a letter TO me! It was a letter of gratitude and THANKS for all the truth and spiritual help I had given this writer.

Others were in a similar vein. They brought tears to my eyes. They made me realize, as never before, how much I owe to HUNDREDS of you--ministers, wives, and other full-time assistants working WITH me in getting God's job done.

It made me realize how much I owe to all you fine and dedicated ministers and your wives for your dedication, loyalty, unflinching and unselfish service, ministering with me and for me to all the precious flock our wonderful God has given us to shepherd and lead into His glorious KINGDOM!

You are used, too, in bringing into the flock many new ones God is calling and giving us to go with us into eternal life in His Kingdom. Some of you also do evangelistic work in your area, sharing in proclaiming the Gospel to your part of the world.

It is the highest mission there is. Some day soon we shall come to really KNOW this!

Johnny Carson may GET his millions per year entertaining people, cracking jokes. Mike Wallace may GET his almost a million a year "exposing" imaginary and imputed wrongdoing of his selected victims, "exposing" them before national television's greatest audience. Oil multi-millionaires may rake in their immense and fabulous fortunes. They are all among the SUCCESSFUL in this world's GETTING competition.

But you and I are the unsung, the falsely accused and the persecuted of this world who are patiently and persistently GIVING the precious and wonderful things of GOD to those who shall live with us forever, long after the "successful" of this world have rotted with their accusations --unless, hopefully, they may yet be saved in the Judgment of the Great White Throne. Or, maybe, some of them may be brought in with us along with that great innumerable multitude of all nations revealed in advance in the seventh chapter of Revelation. Just MAYBE we may yet be privileged to serve and minister to some of them when they become poor in this world's goods and rich as we are in GOD'S ETERNAL AND MATCHLESS BLESSINGS!

I THANK GOD for all of you, and pray earnestly for you every day. I don't get to tell YOU how I love you and how I feel about you and appreciate and thank GOD for you too often, but I do tell God about it EVERY DAY OR EVERY NIGHT! I pray continually for you and those you

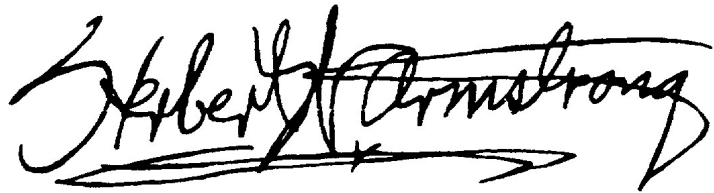
minister to--that God will give you special wisdom in counseling with them, preaching before them, fellowshiping with them.

We may not see one another real often, but we can and I know we all DO sense and feel that closeness to one another, and appreciation for one another. Your many flocks are equally in my mind and prayers daily.

Some in this world are getting their reward right now, and it will perish with them. But WE, fellow servants of Christ, are receiving rich rewards now, and the real and BIG and lasting eternal reward is yet to come with the now SOON coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Just thought I should pass along to you this word of THANKS and APPRECIATION! And thanks for your prayers, for I know that I, too, am in your PRAYERS DAILY.

Carry on!



JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN

--A CULT?

The Worldwide Church of God is not a "cult"!
It is the present generation continuing the
Church of God founded A.D. 31 by Jesus Christ.
Here are the facts.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

HAVE YOU HEARD of Greeks being called, insultingly, "waps," Italians being called "dagos," Germans called "bosch," Jews called "kikes" or "sheenies"? Mexicans who wish to insult Americans call us "gringos."

Some Southerners after the civil war called Northerners "Yankees." They intended it to be an insulting epithet.

A prominent Baptist minister recently said, "If the Worldwide Church of God is a 'cult,' then we Baptists were a 'cult' during the early years of our growth."

Actually, the word "cult" is not an insulting epithet, but today it is often used insultingly. The word comes from the word "culture" which ordinarily is used as a very complimentary term. Webster defines "cult" as, 1) formal religious veneration, worship. 2) a system of religious belief and ritual, adherents to. 3) a religion rejected as unorthodox or spurious.

It is this third usage that was widely used in the sensational Jones-town mass suicide incident.

Since that event occupied front page banner headlines for several days, some who do not know the facts have been labeling any or all small churches, small in membership, as "cults." SMALL CHURCHES ARE NOT "CULTS."

The One True Church

Jesus Christ founded the one true Church of God on the day of Pentecost, in June, 31 A.D. It began that day with 120 members. It was not a "cult." Jesus, during His lifetime called those original members "the little flock" (Luke 12:32).

In the prophecies of the Book of Revelation, two churches are foretold. One, in chapter 17, a great false church, called in verse 5: "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." She was pictured as ruling over nations speaking different languages--large, strong, powerful. The other, the true Church of God, is described in chapter 12 as a small, persecuted church having to flee for her safety.

By the year 53 A.D. the churches in Galatia, Asia Minor, now occupied by Turkey, had already removed themselves from the grace of Christ into another gospel. The true Gospel of Jesus Christ was being suppressed from the world by the larger false church.

The true Church of God, holding to the true Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of Christ and the Apostles, had to go underground, meeting for services in secret. Millions were tortured and put to death for their faith.

But the TRUTH of Jesus Christ and the Apostles was preserved by the persecuted "little flock," and in its fullness in the Holy Bible.

The Worldwide Church of God today holds to the SAME FAITH, same doctrines, same customs and practices, as the original Church of 31 A.D., under the original apostles.

Meanwhile, your Bible says, Revelation 12:9, the WHOLE WORLD has been DECEIVED by the invisible Satan the Devil. Yet God's TRUTH has been preserved in the Bible.

If you would like to see some of that truth revealed and made plain, why not write for our free booklet, Just What Do You Mean--Born Again? It will open your eyes, when you see this truth IN YOUR OWN BIBLE!

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(Editor's Note: The preceding article and the following one were originally written for publication in the August PLAIN TRUTH. They are being printed in advance in the Pastor General's Report at Mr. Armstrong's request.)

A M I I N I T F O R T H E
M O N E Y ?

A FRANK, OPEN STATEMENT OF
THE PLAIN TRUTH

Many are accused of preaching the "Gospel" for the money they GET out of it. Here is a frank, open statement of the PLAIN TRUTH. Here I lay my life bare as an open book before you!

by Herbert W. Armstrong

HERE IS a story such as you have never read before.

The State of California, through the Attorney General's Office, has launched a massive attack against the Worldwide Church of God, myself, and Mr. Stanley Rader. Eight-column banner newspaper headlines screamed to the world the allegation that I, with Mr. Rader, had been siphoning off millions of dollars every year from church funds for our own accounts and use. After a year and a half, NO EVIDENCE of any wrongdoing has been found.

But WHAT ARE THE TRUE FACTS? Have I been in the Work of the living GOD for what I could GET out of it? Why and for what purpose did I start, fifty-three years ago? Just HOW MUCH have I "GOTTEN" out of it? Just how much do I have now? How much does Mr. Stanley R. Rader have now?

I had been quite successful as a young man in the advertising profession. In my own office in the "loop" in downtown Chicago, I was making, on the 1980 dollar-value, more than \$175,000 per year before thirty years of age.

Then, in 1927, at age 34, the living GOD opened my eyes to HIS TRUTH, unpreached in this world. I came to see that the orthodox Christian teaching of my childhood and youth was the very antithesis of the truth God reveals in His Word, the Bible. In His Word God revealed to me that there are just two ways of life. One is "GET"--the way of SELF-centeredness--the way of "I'm in it for what I can GET--I love ME, and I don't care about you." The other--GOD'S WAY--is the way of "GIVE"--outflowing love and concern for the good and welfare of others--the way of LOVE to God and LOVE to neighbor.

Last Sunday I saw a preacher on television say, "We can't know the CAUSE of all the troubles, evils and suffering in the world--but we know that God is suffering along with us." I don't believe that. God has revealed to me the root CAUSE of all the world's evils and sufferings. Every evil in the world has come from living by the "GET"--the "ME FIRST" philosophy.

I wanted to GIVE this amazing truth to the world. In my conversion I did not just "GET"--"RECEIVE" Christ as personal Savior. Rather I

G A V E this sinful self of mine to HIM. I received Him and His truth, NOT to "GET" for myself, or to "GET" salvation and eternal life for myself--but rather, that I might G I V E this precious truth and understanding to the world--that I might SHARE it with thousands and millions of others.

I GAVE UP the business life and its rewards. Seven years later, in poverty, I began GIVING the precious truth over radio.

I started in poverty--from nothing of this world's goods. It was a work of FAITH from the start. I had one pair of shoes. They were righteous--they had "holey soles." I had a suit of clothes for every day in the week--and the one I was wearing was IT! I had no car.

And what did I preach? I preached Jesus Christ and HIS TRUTH--the most DIFFICULT teaching and doctrine in all this world's "Christianity" to proclaim--the HARDEST for my hearers to accept.

Would anyone start out with the most hard-to-accept teaching to make money? Does that make sense? It was a teaching and doctrinal TRUTH that has brought continual opposition, accusation, persecution. It's no way to make money, let me tell you!

I devoted my life to GIVING. My family and I went HUNGRY--and I do mean HUNGRY! That was part of the price paid for GIVING out of love for others, in a world adjusted to "GETTING."

Yet the living Jesus Christ blessed this Work in marvelous ways. Faith was rewarded. Prayers were answered--continually. The Work of the living GOD prospered.

In 1947 I founded my first College--GOD'S college, that is! And on sheer FAITH, with no income whatsoever that was not already appropriated and obligated for radio time and operating expenses. By FAITH it survived.

I incorporated the Church and College on improper legal advice--or we should not be suffering this State versus Church lawsuit now. But I thought the legal advice was good. It was that of a lawyer who had been an attorney in the Internal Revenue Service of the government in Washington for some twelve years. But I took pains to incorporate so that I, personally, could never GET anything out of it, except for modest salary earned. For this, I appointed this ex-government lawyer and two people not related to me as a committee of three to set my salary. I did not even set it myself.

This Work of God grew and expanded at a rate averaging 30% each year over the year preceding for 35 years--probably a record of growth unmatched. God allowed me to be responsible for handling many millions of dollars of HIS money. It was handled honestly!

Along the line, now some 24 years ago, I came to know Mr. Stanley Rader, a very brilliant young Certified Public Accountant. I employed him to establish at our headquarters an accounting system that is puncture proof. It would be IMPOSSIBLE for me, or any officer or employee, to get away with anything more than his honestly earned salary or compensation for services.

Mr. Rader then graduated from the University of Southern California Law School with the highest grades on record. Yale Law School awarded him a Sterling Fellowship and all doors in the legal profession were open to him. But he was working more and more with us, and preferred to stay with the Work of GOD.

Finally, now some years ago, we told Mr. Rader we would like to have him devote his full time with us. This meant giving up a well-paying C.P.A. business and an established law practice--he was a member of the bar in California.

Neither Mr. Rader nor his family were then members of the Church. It is understandable that Mr. Rader did not want to lower his family's living standard. We agreed to pay him a salary equal to his income at the time. It was the highest salary on our payroll--well above my own. I am reminded of a large milling company in Minneapolis which used to have a slogan for its flour--"Costs more--worth it!" A Rolls Royce car costs more than others--but will last 30 or 40 years--cheaper in the long run. God says "the servant is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7). God would not have had me pay him less than he was worth.

Mr. Rader's kind of specialized talent and ability, like a Rolls Royce, may cost a little more--but is WORTH IT, and he should not be underpaid. However, let me add here that both Mr. Rader and one of his daughters now are baptized members of the Worldwide Church of God. And the whole family is firmly loyal to the Church at heart.

Now, today, after all these many years, WHAT DO I HAVE--and WHAT DOES MR. RADER HAVE?

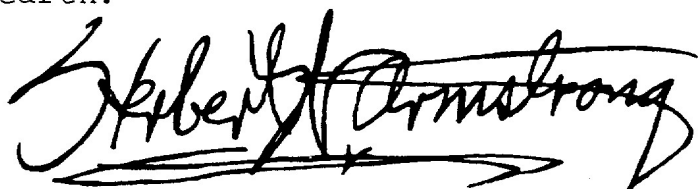
The government IRS has gone thoroughly and with a fine-tooth comb over both our personal accounts, and absolved us completely of any of these false allegations.

All I have in the world is my home in Tucson, Arizona, bought 3 1/2 years ago with a small down payment and a long-term loan with many years yet to run before it is clear; the use of a three-year old car belonging to the Church; and a checking account in the bank. My wife owns a car, clothes and some jewelry bought for her with personal funds after taxes, tithes and offerings. That's all!

Mr. Rader has a bank account about double mine, and his home in Pasadena, and is buying an interest in a small horse ranch in Tucson. His wife has some money in her own name, but it all came from her own mother--not from the Church.

Jesus Christ suffered persecution--was finally put to death on testimony of false witnesses. He said if they persecuted Him, they would persecute those who followed HIS TEACHING AND WAYS.

For fifty-three years I have lived a life devoted to the principle of G I V I N G ! But those who GET do love to accuse falsely and persecute those who GIVE! When we ALL turn to living the GIVING way, there will be PEACE on this war-weary earth!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Herbert Armstrong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line underneath.